(b) Capacity building including infrastructure development would be undertaken and scientists and researchers of the identified institutes would be provided with needed equipments, operational costs, proper flow of scientific and technical information, genetic material and other critical components enabling development and testing of transgenic crops in a mission mode.

(c) The diseases/insect-pests and crops targeted for transgenic research shall be: (i) resistance to fungal diseases (in rice and banana), (ii) resistance to viral diseases (in soybean, cotton, tomato, potato, banana, papaya and cassava), along with (iii) resistance to insect-pests (in rice, sorghum, maize, pigeonpea, chickpea, Brassica, cotton, tomato and brinjal), (iv) tolerance to abiotic stresses (in Brassica) and (v) extended shelf life (in tomato).

Technology mission for NER

1337. SHRI RISHANG KEISHING: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) duration of technology mission for the North Eastern Region and the amount of fund earmarked;

(b) whether work programme under technology mission would be implemented through State Government only or N.G.O. as well; and

(c) how Government will ensure effective implementation of programme under the technology mission?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) The Centrally Sponsored Scheme on "Technology Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture in North Eastern States including Sikkim" is under implementation since 2001-02. The scheme is continuing during the 10th Plan period with an outlay of Rs. 585.00 crores.

(b) The Technology Mission programmes are implemented through Indian Council of Agriculture Research, Small Farmers' Agri Business Consortium, National Horticulture Board, Directorate of Marketing & Inspection and Ministry of Food Processing

Industries, depending upon the nature of the programme. These programmes are implemented under overall directions of State level Steering Committees of the Mission constituted in the States under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretaries of the States concerned. The NGOs are eligible to be beneficiaries under the scheme.

(c) To ensure effective implementation of the Mission programmes, Steering Committee has been constituted in each State under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretary. Besides, the Steering Committee constituted for each Mini Mission also ensure effective implementation of their respective programmes. Periodic external evaluation is also carried out for bringing about further improvements in implementation of the Mission.

Problems of Agriculturists

1338. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of some of the problems and difficulties affecting the agriculturists in the country;

(b) if so, details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken for the amelioration of their conditions particularly in relation to sluggish flow of credit to the agricultural sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government is aware of the problems and difficulties faced by the farmers which inter alia are related to crop productions, credit, crop diseases, watershed development, natural resources management etc.

(c) Government have been implementing various schemes and programmes with the ultimate objective to ameliorate the conditions of farmers. Several initiatives like availability of credit through banks and cooperatives, assistance for purchase of farm equipment and for various other components in order to help the farmers in the production of various crop etc. have been taken.